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## Guard Rails

### Where are Guardrails Required?

Unenclosed floor and roof openings, open and glazed sides of stairways, landings, and ramps, balconies or porches, which are more than 30" above grade and roofs used for other than service of buildings must be protected by a guardrail per the **current** International Building Code (IBC) Sec. 1012 or International Residential Code (IRC) Sec. R312.

### Required Height

The top of guardrails shall not be less than 42 inches in height.

### EXCEPTIONS:

1. The top of guardrails for single family residences and interior guardrails within individual dwelling units may be 36" high.
2. The top of guardrails on a balcony immediately in front of the first row of fixed seats and which are not at the end of an aisle may be 26" in height.
3. The top of guardrails for stairs, exclusive of their landings, may have a height between 34" and 38".

### Guardrail Design

Guardrails shall have intermediate rails or an ornamental pattern shall be provided such that a sphere 4" in diameter cannot pass **between rails**.

### EXCEPTIONS:

1. The open space between the intermediate rails in areas of **commercial and industrial-type occupancies which are not accessible to the public** may be such that a sphere 21" in diameter cannot pass through. IBC Sec. 1012.3.
2. The triangular openings formed by the riser, tread and bottom element of a guardrail at the open side of a stairway may be of such size that a sphere 6" in diameter cannot pass through.